

**Appendix 1**  
**METROPOLITAN POLICE AUTHORITY**  
**AND**  
**METROPOLITAN POLICE SERVICE**

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**  
**STRATEGY**  
**2006 - 2009**

## **1. Preface**

Historically, community engagement has tended to be seen as a means for securing public support and cooperation, and to some extent gathering intelligence, rather than giving the public a more significant voice in policing. Today there is an explicit emphasis on police responsiveness to the public and on local accountability to the public. This emphasis is reflected in the first priority of the National Policing Plan 2005-08, which requires the provision of a citizen focused service that responds to the needs of communities and individuals.

We know that actively engaged communities contribute significantly to the improvement of policing services, the reduction of anti social behaviour and solving crime at all levels. Communities can only make these contributions if the engagement work of the Metropolitan Police Authority (MPA) and the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) is undertaken with a genuine desire to listen and learn.

This community engagement strategy demonstrates the commitment of the MPA and the MPS to develop a joint approach to engagement with the public that provides the means through which all parties derive maximum benefit: the MPS, to understand what communities and individuals really need from them, from which they can design services that meet those needs; the MPA, to monitor the way in which the MPS undertakes engagement and by promoting citizenship and community confidence; and the public, by receiving the very best police service delivered to the highest standards.

Although there is much in common between the MPS and MPA roles in respect of community engagement, the two organisations have their own distinctive objectives in this area. Whilst this document sets out the objectives, the detail of these objectives and priority areas will be established through the development of delivery plans. These plans will be monitored within the MPS by the Citizen Focus Programme Board and publicly scrutinised by the MPA.

## **2. Definition**

Community engagement is defined in this strategy as:

“The proactive harnessing of the energies, knowledge and skills of communities and partners not merely to identify problems but also to negotiate priorities for action and shape and deliver solutions”.

The concept of community as a group of people who all hold something in common can be understood as either:

- People who share a locality on geographical place, or

- People who are or share communities of interest, i.e. share an identity, for example on the basis of ethnicity or faith – or share an experience, such as people with a particular disability.

### **3. Purpose**

The purpose of this Community Engagement Strategy is to:

- Enable Londoners, our partners and our staff to understand the MPA and MPS responsibility for community engagement.
- Set out how the MPA and MPS will engage with Londoners to put community engagement at the heart of citizen focused policing.
- Provide a framework for embedding community engagement in the practice of policing in London.
- Ensure engagement activity is coordinated and prioritised in line with MPA and MPS corporate priorities.
- Establish methods and measures by which the MPA can assess the effectiveness and efficiency of the MPS in undertaking community engagement, assist in improving performance and enhance community accountability.
- Establish the basis on which the MPA can play a leadership role in strengthening the civic accountability and oversight of policing in London by enhancing the capacity of Londoners to participate in and influence police policy decisions, both locally and London-wide.

### **4. Benefits of engagement**

Community engagement produces two main benefits: improved decision-making and enhanced citizenship. The MPS focuses primarily on the decision-making benefit of community engagement and increasing levels of trust, confidence and satisfaction with policing at the individual level. The MPA's governance and oversight roles call for a wider perspective that focuses on both the decision-making and the citizenship aspects.

Key elements of the improved decision-making and enhanced citizenship benefits are shown below:

## Decision-making

**Improved policies and services:** community engagement brings current local first-hand knowledge to issues of policy and service provision. Local people and service users bring a different perspective to problem solving.

**Public interest decisions:** policy and service decisions better reflect the needs of users and citizens.

**Improved accountability:** community engagement increases the openness and transparency of the police. It increases their accountability to the public.

**Savings in time and money:** accurate information from users and citizens avoids the wrong decisions being taken and reduces the need to undertake costly corrective action.

## Citizenship

**Higher levels of trust:** community engagement bridges the 'us and them' feeling between decision-makers and the public. It builds trust, knowledge, legitimacy and ownership.

**Active citizenship:** being invited to take part in decision-making encourages people to develop the skills and interest in becoming more active in their communities.

**Inclusiveness:** community engagement is a way of opening up decision-making to all parts of the community. It builds relations across communities and tackles problems of isolation.

**Enhanced democracy:** it can build the sense that democracy is something that everyone has a stake in, and takes part in.

## 5. MPA responsibility

The MPA has two overarching objectives for community engagement. Firstly, to monitor, scrutinise and ensure that the MPS discharge their responsibility for community engagement as outlined in this strategy. Secondly, to promote the enhanced citizenship and community confidence agenda in respect both of the MPS's and the MPA's activities.

The MPA role therefore rests on two strands.

- Ensuring that the MPS actually do engage Londoners in as open and constructive way as possible. In mainstreaming community engagement through all levels and facets of the service the Met must be able to demonstrate that it is engaging all Londoners in delivering policing services.

- Ensuring effective ways are in place to increase Londoners awareness and understanding of policing issues and the capacity and willingness by which individuals and communities can work collectively to shape and strengthen the civic governance of policing in London.

The MPA shall have overall responsibility for directing and monitoring the implementation of the Community Engagement Strategy. In fulfilling this responsibility, the MPA will assume specific duties for:

**(a) Governance and Scrutiny**

The MPA has a primary responsibility in the management of the police, of scrutinising performance and holding those responsible to account.

This responsibility will be met by:

- Requiring clear statements on user impact and citizen focus and the actions being taken by the MPS as a result of citizen involvement. The MPA, through all its Committee and decision making processes, will therefore require, for example in the annual policing plans, in local strategic plans and in the initiatives undertaken by specialist areas within the MPS, the actions being taken to improve the citizen focus of policing services and the actions taken as a result of citizen involvement.
- As Part of Section C of every MPA Committee Report there will now be required clear statements on user impact and citizen focus and in addition a summary analysis of how community engagement has informed the content of the report.

The Policing Performance Assessment Framework (PPAF) together with the baseline assessment framework developed by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC); provide the MPA with an initial framework for measuring, comparing and assessing MPS performance with reference to community engagement and citizen focus policing. In recognising these national measures are largely concerned with basic user satisfaction rates, the MPA will:

- Work with the Home Office, ACPO, HMIC as well as the MPS itself to strengthen the way police performance is measured and inspected so that it reflects the involvement and the views and priorities of the public and to further develop standards and outcomes based performance measures that will enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of community engagement activity.
- In supporting the development of more robust standards and performance measures for community engagement, the MPA will apply these standards in assessing all reports and presentations

and scrutinise delivery against these standards in terms of progress against the strategy.

- In receiving reports, the MPA will also expect to see differential impact assessments and comparative satisfaction levels by race, ethnicity, faith, disability, age and gender.

**( b ) *Strengthening Partnerships and Community Engagement at the Local Level:***

In order to enhance local accountability, increase partnership work and strengthen local democratic involvement, the MPA will:

- Reposition its current arrangements by which it supports community-police engagement at a borough level by sharing funding decisions with local statutory partners.
- Continue to support the development of innovative models and structures of community police engagement to ensure a coordinated, seamless process of community participation from the local neighbourhood level to the borough level. The MPS will continue to have direct operational responsibility for consultation at the ward level through Safer Neighbourhood teams and with any 'meso-level' systems of engagement such as Sector Working Groups.
- Pursue in partnership with the MPS, an evaluation and research agenda that will focus on clarifying and strengthening existing methods and structures and identifying the nature of participants, intended outcomes, etc, of each community engagement mechanism. The MPA will support and disseminate innovative methods and structures for community-police engagement not only from across London but also draw on national and international experience.
- Establish a Community Engagement Reference Group and Board to assist in progressing further reform and the criteria and standards for community police engagement performance at the local level
- Continue to encourage local statutory partners to enhance their capacity and willingness to accept local responsibility for engagement and carry it out in a manner that is supportive, effective and collaborative.
- Receive annual reports on the methods and impact of community engagement on the activities of CDRPs. These reports will be further supplemented by the work of the MPA officers working with local CDRPs in strengthening their partnership and community

engagement activities this responsibility will include monitoring and assessing whether:

- Community engagement is responsive to the diversity of local crime and disorder needs at the borough level.
- Community engagement activities are compliant with existing and impending legislation, conform with all equality and diversity obligations and commitments and are inclusive of all sectors of London's populations.

**( c ) Community Engagement at the Pan-London Level**

The MPA will strengthen its activities in obtaining a pan-London perspective in gathering Londoners views on overall strategic policing issues by:

- Ensuring that the MPA's Safer London Panel is effectively used and its collective viewpoint is widely disseminated and promoted
- Maintaining and strengthening partnership work with appropriate institutions such as the GLA, the Home Office, ALG, GOL, APA, etc
- Building partnerships with pan-London community based organisations to undertake community engagement with specific target groups.
- Collecting and analysing community research, surveys and other information through systematic research undertaken by the Home Office, the GLA, ALG, etc, on community policing needs and ensure these inform the MPA's planning and decision making process.

**(d) Serving diverse communities:**

London's diversity includes characteristics not only of race, ethnicity, faith, language and immigrant refugee status. It also includes huge differences in crime and safety experiences, and thereby different policing needs based on age, gender, sexual orientation and mental and physical ability. Further layers of ever increasing diversity that impacts upon policing – and thereby methods of community engagement – include the complex and overlapping differences and divisions that exist in terms of people's values and beliefs, lifestyles, life chances and levels of disadvantage and deprivation.

The dramatically changing and mobile nature of London's population creates greater urgency for more purposeful community engagement processes that are accessible and equitable for all sectors of the population. The MPA will wish to assure itself that:

- Appropriate structures such as the Equal Opportunities and Diversity Board in the MPA, and the Diversity and Citizen Focus Directorate within the MPS and other mechanisms are in place and

the necessary resources are being applied to address the policing needs of London's diverse population in a manner whereby their different experiences and needs are being taken into account effectively.

- Ensuring that community engagement activities are compliant with existing and impending equality and diversity legislation.

**(e) Strengthening the community voice:**

Successful community-police engagement is a two-way process that requires residents who are informed, willing and able to get involved. The MPA will therefore continue to recognise and support the existing high level of commitment on the part of Londoners to provide an effective independent voice and civilian oversight over its police by:

- Fulfilling the new statutory responsibility to ensure that Londoners are informed of local policing activities by working with the MPS in developing public awareness and providing policing summaries to every household in London.
- Enhancing the knowledge, skills and capacity of Londoners in shaping and strengthening policing in London through increased communications (newsletters, reports, etc) training seminars (e.g. how to chair meetings) and conferences.
- Fulfilling its statutory responsibilities in support of the Independent Custody Visiting Scheme.
- Supporting the development of robust community police engagement groups at the local level;
- Addressing policing issues of particular public concern through various public forums such as the range of community engagement activities in support of the, 'Counter Terrorism: The London Debate' initiative.

In summary, the above strategic directions are consistent with the objectives of strengthening the MPAs primary governance and scrutiny responsibilities as well as enhancing the quality and standards for public participation, increasing partnership work, devolving decision making and safeguarding and strengthening local democratic involvement.

**MPS responsibility**

The MPS overarching objective of community engagement is to ensure the MPS is able to provide a citizen focused policing service, which enables improved decision making by listening to and meeting the needs of all London's citizens.

These objectives will be met by:



**(a) Ensuring capacity for community engagement:**

Capacity refers to the MPS knowing what to do and how to do it, and having the appropriate skills and other resources to carry out community engagement to a high professional standard. To do this the MPS will:

- *understand the environment (who will be engaged).* Have a detailed and neighbourhood level understanding of the demographics of communities including interests, needs, priorities and preferences of each section of that community.
- *understand how different sections of community feel comfortable interacting with the police.* We understand what communities think of policing in London by carrying out research and recording satisfaction levels.
- *have consolidated stakeholder management.* A managed and accessible stakeholder database makes the best use of internal resources and enables us to co-ordinate and target invitations to stakeholders.
- *ensure staff are able to use methods appropriate to situation.* Engagement can be deployed to assist in a number of situations such as; neighbourhood challenges, public order policing, strategic priorities, critical incidents, gun crime and community relations, etc. Tools will be available to all staff to ensure a range of effective levels of engagement can be carried out. This includes communication, research, consultation, partnership, and volunteering.
- *locally adapted strategies and processes are put in place.* These are clear on what they aim to achieve and ensure the purpose; level and anticipated outcomes of engagement are understood and communicated. Expectations are set and met.
- *put standards in place to ensure the real picture matches the theory.* Mechanisms are in place to ensure standards are set and engagement monitored. Scrutiny and accountability processes are in place within the MPS and the results are recorded and publicised. The role of the MPA and other bodies to facilitate public accountability is clear to both MPS staff and the public.
- *put processes in place to ensure communication of engagement activity.* This includes collating and advertising events. Publicising the outputs and outcomes. The appropriate technology will be harnessed to enable communication, avoid duplication and ensure efficient use of resources.

**(b) Embedding community engagement within MPS:**

As well as ensuring the MPS has the capability to carry out engagement, it will also embed engagement within the culture and structure of the MPS by ensuring:

- *engagement is seen as a core part of delivering and managing all services.* Value driven leadership will ensure that engagement is championed at all levels of the MPS. It will ensure the benefits are understood and communicated.
- *engagement findings affect decision making.* Priorities and service delivery strategies are influenced, changed and where appropriate, driven by community concerns and priorities. Engagement findings are fed into appropriate decision making processes and the outcomes recorded and reported back to those who participated.
- *communication is seen as an integral aspect of engagement.* Communication concerning community engagement activity is ongoing, consistent and two way. A variety of ways to communicate are used to ensure it is appropriate to the needs both of the community and of the occasion.
- *Information is regularly discussed and shared with all sections of the community.* There is consistency in individual as well as corporate engagement messages. Responses are listened to and acted on, whether engagement is a part of a formal or an informal process.
- *Ongoing feedback is communicated to the participants.* The community and staff need to know how their input has impacted on the delivery of policing services.
- *patterns of engagement are targeted to reflect community needs and strategic priorities.* Engagement activity is targeted to meet the needs of the community. The methods are accessible to all parts of society. The issues are the subjects the community want. Engagement activity is targeted to reflect strategic priorities. Engagement is understood as a means to an end, and not an end in itself.
- *the MPS makes best use of community intelligence.* Staff understand what community intelligence is. Staff know how and when to elicit it, what to do with it, and its benefit as an indicator of community tension. Processes are in place to deal with it, ensuring it is systematically recorded, acted on at the appropriate levels and fed into appropriate decision making processes.

- *policing services are delivered in partnership with the community.* Partnership opportunities are identified and maximised. Volunteer and partnership initiatives are in place.
- *a joined up approach to working takes place within the MPS.* Co-ordination mechanisms exist to ensure engagement activity is carried out within a framework of MPS engagement activity. Engagement activity is joined up and responses are shared between agencies. Engagement resources are shared with citizens and partners and problems solved together.

## **7. Governance**

The delivery of this strategy is dependent on continued high level support within the MPA and the MPS ensuring effective governance of the implementation plans of both organisations. The implementation plans provide detailed activity plans of both MPA and MPS activity that will deliver the strategy, including business group priorities for engaging communities. The main conduits through which the delivery of the strategy is monitored are described below:

### **Citizen Focus Policing Programme Board**

The governance for the Citizen Focus Policing Programme is through a Programme Board comprising a Member and an Officer of the MPA together with senior representatives from all of the MPS business groups. The role of the Board is to ensure that all of the elements of the programme are delivering the planned benefits and to ensure that the other major change programmes underway within the MPS adopt a citizen focused approach to their work.

The Community Engagement Strategy is a key component of the Citizen Focus Policing Programme because it underpins the way in which we understand the needs of the public and this in turn helps us shape the delivery of policing services. The Citizen Focus Policing Programme Board will therefore have direct oversight of the Engagement Strategy and the implementation of the accompanying MPS work plan that supports the strategy.

### **The MPS Communities Together Strategic Engagement Team (CTSET)**

The MPS CTSET is responsible for administering the implementation of the engagement strategy and for identifying issues for the Citizen Focus Programme Board. The unit is responsible for putting in place a performance management framework for engagement activity and to ensure that standards are set and monitored throughout the MPS.

### **MPA**

The Coordination and Policing Committee will exercise oversight responsibilities and policy directions in the implementation of this community engagement strategy.

The MPA Portfolio Holder for Community Engagement, who will sit on the Citizen Focus Policing Programme Board, will serve as the Lead Member for this strategy.

The MPA Senior Management Team will drive the implementation of MPA activity.